

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 21, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
301 7th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Ur Jaddou
Director
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
111 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear President Biden, Secretary Mayorkas, and Director Jaddou:

We write to urge the administration to expeditiously utilize its statutory authority to extend humanitarian parole to Venezuelan asylum seekers at the U.S.-Mexico border and redesignate Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status.

Families from Venezuela are fleeing violence, insecurity, malnutrition, as well as the lack of medicine and essential services. The New York Times documented how migrants, often families with children, cross rivers, scale mountains, and traverse the Darien Gap, in hope of reaching safety in the United States.¹ The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees categorizes the situation in Venezuela as the “second largest external displacement crisis in the world.”² Economists have described Venezuela’s economic decline as the “single largest economic collapse outside of war in at least 45 years.”³

Through 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5)(A), Congress has provided the Secretary of Homeland Security broad discretionary authority to “parole into the United States... on a case-by-case basis for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit” any noncitizen applying for admission to the United States. For decades, both Republican and Democratic administrations have utilized humanitarian parole to provide relief to noncitizens. Once paroled into the country, individuals can apply for a work permit on a case-by-case basis.

Congress has also provided the Secretary of Homeland Security authorization to designate or redesignate a foreign state for Temporary Protected Status (TPS).⁴ As of October 2022, 15

¹ Julie Turkewitz. *In Record Numbers, Venezuelans Risk a Deadly Trek to Reach the U.S. Border*. New York Times. Oct. 7, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/07/world/americas/venezuelan-migrants-us-border.html>

² *Venezuela Situation*. UNHCR. <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/venezuela-emergency.html>

³ Anatoly Kurmanaev. *Venezuela’s Collapse Is the Worst Outside of War in Decades, Economists Say*. New York Times. May 17, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/world/americas/venezuela-economy.html>

⁴ See 8 U.S.C. 1254a(b)(1).

countries are designated for TPS.⁵ On September 8, 2022, a Notice issued on the Federal Register extended the designation of Venezuela for TPS, but did not redesignate Venezuela for TPS.⁶ By not redesignating, Venezuelans who entered the United States after March 8, 2021 and meet the TPS eligibility criteria remain ineligible. As a result, relief is denied for thousands of migrants currently residing in the United States that have recently fled unsafe conditions in Venezuela.

The ongoing humanitarian crisis in Venezuela warrants a favorable exercise of discretion for parole as well as the redesignation of Venezuela for TPS. We urge you to protect displaced Venezuelans residing in the United States and asylum-seekers at the U.S.-Mexico border. Thank you for your attention and we look forward to your response on this matter.

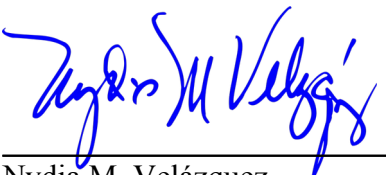
Sincerely,



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



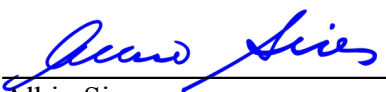
Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

⁵ *Temporary Protected Status*. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service.
<https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status>

⁶ *Extension of the Designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status*. Federal Register. Sept. 8, 2022.
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/09/08/2022-19527/extension-of-the-designation-of-venezuela-for-temporary-protected-status>



Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress